

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

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2.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The purpose of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts and suggest feasible mitigation measures to reduce significant adverse environmental effects for the proposed "Poseidon Seawater Desalination Project" project. (Unless otherwise noted, "project" refers to all aspects of the proposed Poseidon Seawater Desalination Project, including temporary construction-related effects and long-term effects associated with project buildout and implementation).

It is the intent of this EIR to provide construction-level environmental documentation for the project by utilizing the most current and detailed plans, technical studies and related information available. For more detailed information regarding the proposed development, refer to Section 3.0, *PROJECT DESCRIPTION*.

This EIR will be used by the City of Huntington Beach and other responsible agencies and interested parties to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project (refer to Section 3.7, *AGREEMENTS, PERMITS AND APPROVALS*, for a list of responsible agencies and project approvals).

2.2 COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

This EIR has been prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutes (as amended through January, 2001) and the CEQA Guidelines, particularly California Code of Regulations, Article 9, Section 15120 through 15132 (content of an EIR). As an EIR, this document will serve as the comprehensive compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines. This EIR evaluates the issues and impacts identified as potentially significant in the Initial Study, in addition to issues identified in the course of project research and in the Notice of Preparation responses (see Appendix A, *INITIAL STUDY/NOTICE OF PREPARATION*).

The City of Huntington Beach determined that the project may result in significant adverse effects and therefore requires an EIR. This determination was based on the Initial Study and a preliminary review of available project information. As part of the review process, the Draft EIR is subject to a 45-day public review period by responsible and concerned agencies and interested parties. Following this period, responses to comments received from these agencies will be prepared. The Final EIR will consist of the Draft EIR or a revision of the draft, as well as comments received on the Draft EIR and the responses to these comments. The EIR will be considered by decision makers prior to action on the project.

2.3 SCOPE OF THE EIR

An Initial Study was completed for the proposed project by the City of Huntington Beach on May 15, 2001, to determine the potential environmental impacts of the project. The Notice of

Preparation (NOP) was distributed by the City of Huntington Beach on May 17, 2001. The comment period closed on June 15, 2001, following the state mandated 30-day Notice of Preparation review period. As project design progressed and an off-site underground pump station within an Orange County Resource Preservation Easement was proposed, an Updated NOP was distributed to local homeowners' associations (HOAs) and property owners surrounding the underground booster pump station site on March 4, 2002 (refer to Appendix A, *INITIAL STUDY/NOTICE OF PREPARATION*). This EIR addresses potential significant impacts in the following areas, as identified in the Initial Study. Additionally, the EIR includes relevant issues raised throughout the EIR preparation process. Issues discussed within this EIR are as follows:

- ❖ Land Use/Relevant Planning
- ❖ Geology and Soils
- ❖ Hydrology and Water Quality
- ❖ Air Quality
- ❖ Noise
- ❖ Public Services and Utilities
- ❖ Aesthetics/Light & Glare
- ❖ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ❖ Construction Related Impacts
- ❖ Additional CEQA-mandated discussion (alternatives, growth, cumulative impacts).

2.4 PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS

The Poseidon Seawater Desalination Project EIR process has included public scoping in order to gather information on concerns and issues that the general public may have regarding the project and the EIR. Two public scoping meetings were held on June 6, 2001 (2:30pm and 7:15pm), at Edison Community Center in the City of Huntington Beach. Participants at both meetings consisted primarily of local residents, City staff, and representatives from the Southeast Huntington Beach Neighborhood Association (SEHBNA) and the Southeast Homeowner's Association (SEHOA). A summary of issues and concerns raised at each scoping meeting are described below:

❖ Land Use/Relevant Planning

- Local homeowners will be directly impacted by another industrial use nearby their residences.
- Implementation of the project should not cost the City or taxpayers any money.
- If the desalination plant is built, local residents should receive some sort of direct benefit.
- The potential implementation of a City water storage facility nearby the proposed Poseidon Desalination Project should be planned carefully to avoid impacting local residents.

❖ **Air Quality**

- The proposed desalination project should not contribute to the AES Huntington Beach Generating Station's pollutant emissions.
- The desalination project should not create fugitive dust or odors.

❖ **Noise**

- All stationary noise sources should be properly attenuated.

❖ **Public Services and Utilities**

- The proposed plant's electrical demand should be regulated, as electricity is in short supply statewide.

❖ **Hydrology and Water Quality**

- The brine discharge from the proposed Poseidon plant should not change the temperature of discharge from the AES outfall into the ocean
- Poseidon should be cautious to ensure that their product water is compatible with water already being distributed within the County

2.5 EIR ORGANIZATION

The Draft EIR is organized into 10 sections:

- ❖ Section 1.0, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, provides a brief project description and summary of the environmental impacts, and the mitigation measures for each impact.
- ❖ Section 2.0, INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE, provides CEQA compliance information.
- ❖ Section 3.0, PROJECT DESCRIPTION, provides a project location, environmental setting, background and history, project characteristics, project objectives, phasing, agreements and approvals which are required for the project.
- ❖ Section 4.0, ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, discusses the existing conditions for each environmental issue area. This section will describe the methodology for significance determination and identifies short-term and long-term environmental impacts associated with the project and their level of significance before mitigation, recommends feasible mitigation measures to reduce the significance of impacts, and identifies areas of unavoidable significant impacts after mitigation.
- ❖ Section 5.0, LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT, discusses the significant environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action, should it be implemented; growth-inducing impacts; and cumulative impacts associated with General Plan buildout and concurrent surrounding projects.

- ❖ Section 6.0, ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION, describes alternatives to the project, some of which may be considered during project deliberations.
- ❖ Section 7.0, EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT, provides an explanation of potential impacts which have been determined not to be significant in the Initial Study checklist.
- ❖ Section 8.0, ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED, identifies the lead agency, preparers of the EIR, all federal, state and local agencies and other organizations and individuals consulted during the preparation of the EIR.
- ❖ Section 9.0, BIBLIOGRAPHY, identifies reference sources utilized for the EIR.
- ❖ Section 10.0, APPENDICES.

2.6 USE OF THE EIR

This EIR is part of the environmental review process for the Poseidon Seawater Desalination Project. It is the intent of this EIR to enable the City of Huntington Beach and other responsible agencies and interested parties to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project. (Please refer to Section 3.7, AGREEMENTS, PERMITS AND APPROVALS, for a list of responsible agencies having approval authority over the project.) This EIR suggests measures to mitigate potentially significant impacts of the proposed project.

2.7 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this EIR have been cited and incorporated, in accordance with §15148 and 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines, to eliminate the need for inclusion of voluminous engineering and technical reports within this environmental document. This EIR incorporates the following documents by reference, which are available for review at the City of Huntington Beach Planning Department (located at 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, California):

City of Huntington Beach General Plan EIR, 1995

This document addresses the environmental impacts of General Plan buildout, including development of the proposed project site, as well as analysis of cumulative and growth-inducing impacts.

Huntington Beach Generating Station Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, November 27, 1996

The purpose of the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) performed at the Huntington Beach Generating Station (HBGS) was to evaluate the environmental condition of the facility by investigating site features that have potential recognized environmental conditions. A secondary objective was to obtain initial information pertaining to the nature and extent of air quality compounds of potential concern and to identify areas that may require future investigation or remediation. The project site is located within the study area limits of this assessment.

City of Huntington Beach General Plan, 1996

The General Plan for the City of Huntington Beach is a policy planning document which provides the framework for management and utilization of the City's physical, economic and human resources. This document guides civic decisions regarding land use, the design and/or character of buildings and open spaces, the conservation of existing housing and the provision of new dwelling units, the provisions of supporting infrastructure and public services, the protection of environmental resources, the allocation of fiscal resources, and the protection of residents from natural and human-caused hazards.

City of Huntington Beach Local Coastal Program, 2001

In accordance with the California Coastal Act, this document consists of a land use plan, zoning ordinances, district maps, and other actions which, when taken together, implement the policies of the Coastal Act at the local level. The Local Coastal Program allows the City of Huntington Beach to have jurisdiction over Coastal Development Permits within the coastal zone portion of the City, as would be applicable to the Poseidon Seawater Desalination Project.

Southern California Edison Huntington Beach Fuel Oil Storage Tank Removal Project Environmental Assessment, April 20, 2000

The Southern California Edison Huntington Beach Fuel Oil Storage Tank Removal Project Environmental Assessment assesses the significance of any environmental impacts associated with the removal of numerous high capacity aboveground storage tanks used to store fuel oils. Information regarding existing environmental conditions, site status, and tank capacities exists within the document.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for Edison Pipeline and Terminal Company Huntington Beach, May 2000

The Phase I ESA for Edison Pipeline and Terminal Company (EPTC) Huntington Beach identifies recognized environmental conditions as defined by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), with regards to hazardous materials. In addition to recognized environmental conditions, the document identifies "areas of potential concern" to address those environmental issues that do not specifically meet the definition of a recognized environmental condition, but may warrant further investigation. The project site is located within the study area limits of this assessment.

2000 Regional Urban Water Management Plan, Municipal Water District of Orange County, December, 2000.

This document analyzes water supply and water use efficiency measures unique to the Municipal Water District of Orange County's (MWDOC) service area. It also summarizes the current and proposed water management activities of MWDOC.

2.8 TECHNICAL REFERENCES

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15148, the Poseidon Seawater Desalination Project EIR cites appropriate technical studies and other reference documents, as indicated throughout the EIR and listed in Section 9, BIBLIOGRAPHY. These technical studies are available for review at the City of Huntington Beach Planning Department located at 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, California.